

PANAMA VS. NICARAGUA: INTERVIEWS WITH CENTRAL AMERICAN DIPLOMATS.

Minister From Colombia States the Position of His Government and What the French Have to Sell—How the Canal Can Be Built and How Its Construction Will Open Fortunes to Americans in the Republic of Colombia—Nicaraguan Official Gives the Claims of That Country and Says Panama Canal Will Be a Failure—He Discusses the Nicaraguan Route and Tells How Americans Are Emigrating There to Make Fortunes in Rubber, Cocoanuts and Gold Mines.



SENATOR CARLOS MARTINEZ SILVA
MINISTER FROM COLOMBIA

Special Correspondence of The Sunday Republic.

Washington, May 23.—Where shall we build our great canal across the isthmus? The answer to this is given in the following interviews with the Ministers from the countries of the principal routes. Each man thinks his Government has the best proposition and each has little good to say of the scheme of the other. But I shall let the diplomats speak for themselves.

My first interview was with the Minister from Nicaragua. His excellency's name is Senator Luis F. Corea. He is a highly educated Central American, who during his residence in Washington has acquired the English tongue, so that it was in English that our conversation was held. Said Senator Corea:

"There is no question but that the best route for the canal is the Nicaraguan route. Your engineers have so decided, and it seems to me that all the arguments, both sanitary and financial, are in its favor. By Nicaragua your Pacific and Atlantic States are nearer each other by two days than they would be at Panama. A canal there could be more easily maintained, and in the end it would be far cheaper than the Panama route."

"The Panama advocates make different claims," said I.

"Yes," replied Senator Corea. "It is easy to make any sort of a claim, but more difficult to support it by facts. Let us look at the facts. The Panama Canal Company has already spent \$200,000,000 and it has completed about one-fourth of the undertaking. It is willing to sell that fourth to the United States for \$40,000,000, but after the United States has bought it, it has three-fourths of the canal to make. At the same rate as the first fourth the expense would be \$240,000,000. It might be done for less, but the cost will be enormous.

\$40,000,000 of Our Gold

Would Go to France.

"There is one thing," continued Senator Corea, "that I have not seen mentioned in the consideration of this Panama proposition. The United States is, I know, the richest country of the world, but can it afford to take \$40,000,000 right out of its circulation and give it to France. If this deal is made your Government will have to pay \$40,000,000 to the French and you will have nothing in return for it but the chance to spend hundreds of millions more. If you take up the Nicaragua Canal you will have to spend less money eventually and the greater part of the money will remain right here. It will all go toward the purchase of American machinery and supplies, with the exception of the comparatively small amount paid out for wages."

"But the same will be true of the Panama Canal, will it not?"

"To some extent, but nothing like the amount which will go into American pockets in the construction of the Nicaragua Canal. The labor cost at Panama will be far greater than at Nicaragua. The extravagance of the French has ruined labor conditions there. You will not be able to get workmen for less than \$2 per day, while at Nicaragua they will not cost more than 50 cents per day. This means that we can save you three-fourths of the labor expense of the work. Our labor is better than that of Panama. We have the Indians, who are easily managed; they live upon little and consequently can work at low wages. They will not be walking delegates to incite trouble among the Jamaicans and other West Indians, whom you import to help along the work."

Nicaragua All Ready for the United States.

"But would it not take some time to prepare for work upon the Nicaraguan Canal? You would have to build railroads and put up towns, would you not?"

"Not at all," replied Senator Corea. "There are towns and cities now along the route of the canal. Lake Nicaragua has many thriving settlements upon its banks, and the country about it is rich in plantations and grazing lands. We could easily feed all the workmen needed, and we have water and railroad communications which would put

your supplies just where you want them. We have now one of the most progressive rulers of this hemisphere, General Jose Santos Zelaya. He was educated in Europe and has traveled widely. He is very broad in his views, and he realizes that the canal will greatly help our country and people. He will do all that he can to aid your Government, and will grant all necessary concessions. At first it was proposed to create a neutral zone of three miles on each side of the canal. This or anything else that is necessary will be given, although by our Constitution we cannot sell the land to a foreign power. We can, however, lease it in perpetuity, and this means the same thing."

"How about the health conditions along the line of the canal, Senator Corea?" said I.

"Can our people live and work there?"

"Certainly they can," replied the Minister. "I have gone over the reports of your engineers and surveying parties. They state that Nicaragua is the healthiest of all tropical countries, and not to be considered in the same class as Panama. Surgeon Bradford, who went over the route with sixty survivors and 100 Jamaicans and natives in 1887, says that he did not have one case of serious illness in his whole party."

Country Free From Malaria and Yellow Fever.

He was there in the rainy season and was doing actual work along the line now proposed. Admiral Walker reports that he had 20 men with him while he was making his surveys through the swamps, and that he had less sickness and malaria than he would have had had he been running a survey in Virginia at the same season of the year. I can give you similar quotations from every traveler and engineer who has been over the route. We are entirely free from the yellow fever and from malaria in any dangerous form."

"Is Nicaragua such a country that Americans could prosper in it?"

"I think so, without doubt," was the reply. "A fit answer to that question is that many Americans are now doing so. We have been having quite an immigration from your country. Three hundred and fifteen young Americans came in last month, and I get at least fifty letters a week inquiring about the canal and the chances for securing land near it. Already a number of plantations have been set out by Americans who expect to make fortunes there in raising bananas, pineapples, coconuts and rubber."

"What are the opportunities for such men?"

"They are very great if they can only wait a while for their crops to come into bearing. In rubber it takes about seven years to raise the trees, but after that time they pay very well. I am interested in a plantation which has 25,000 trees. They are now five years old, and will produce rubber about 1904. The trees cost but a trifle to plant and care for. We grow the sprouts in nurseries and have the Indians set them out at 25 cents per task. A task means the setting out of a certain number of trees. The Indians may do it in three hours, four hours or eight hours, but he is paid by the task without regard to time. After the trees are once set out they require no more attention until they are ready for cropping."

Opportunities for Making Money in Cocoanuts and Bananas.

"There are good opportunities for making money in cocoanuts and bananas, and also in coffee. About one-third of our coffee estates are now in the hands of the Germans, but if the United States builds this canal we expect to see many American planters

come in. We raise a very fine coffee, as good as can be raised in any part of the world, and it brings high prices.

"The mineral resources of Nicaragua are great," continued Senator Corea. "We have some very rich gold mines, and we are now building railroads to open up the mineral parts of the country. We have also large areas fitted for cattle raising. There are now hundreds of thousands of cattle upon these lands, but there might be millions. We export many hides, and of late have been exporting meat to Cuba and other parts of the West India Islands."

"Our people realize that the canal would benefit them. They believe it will double the value of their lands and greatly increase the prosperity of the country. We have no doubt but that it will eventually be built through our territory."

I had an interview on this same subject with Senator Carlos Martinez Silva, the Minister from Colombia, who left Washington some weeks ago. He told me that Colombia was very anxious that the canal should be built and that it was willing to give any concessions which would lead to the choice of the Panama route. Said he: "We feel that a canal will eventually go through the isthmus of Panama, and that if your country does not make it some other party will. What we want is to see the United States buy out the French, and we believe that you will find it to your interest to do so."

Believes the Advantages Are With the Panama Route.

"Suppose the United States does that,

Senator Silva," said I, "what will she get that she would not have on the Nicaragua route?"

"She would have the difference between something and nothing. All the advantages are with the Panama route. It is the shortest route, the route with the fewest locks, and the route that could be maintained at the least cost. It is a route that has been tested by experiments and actual work."

"The Nicaragua line is absolutely undeveloped. Surveys have been made, but no practical experiments have shown the possible expense of construction. You know of the railroad tunnel which they are now making in New York. Before that tunnel was dug all sorts of borings and experiments were made, and upon the basis of these an estimate was formed of its probable cost."

"When the work was done it was found that the estimates were \$300,000 below the figures of the engineers. The railroad tunnel was very short. The Nicaragua canal survey extends over many miles. It has been made in an unknown country, and you can't tell how far the figures of the engineers will be from the actual cost. They can figure as to what they can see, but they cannot calculate all the difficulties that may come up."

"On the Panama canal work has been done along the whole line. A great part of it has been dredged, and the mountains have been actually cut down. Already the fifth of the canal have been completed, and you can figure out the cost of the remainder almost to a cent. A large force has been at work for the last five years, and the property is in a good working condition. One set of managers can easily stop and another begin their labor on a few weeks' notice."

What the French Have at Panama.

"But does the work of the French amount to much, your Excellency?" I asked.

"I think it does," replied Senator Silva. "What have you not heard of the line of the canal? It is a great work. When the canal was started an enormous amount of preliminary work had to be done before the real operations could commence. Houses had to be built for the officials and workmen. There was no timber to be got of, and the most of the lumber was brought from the United States. Some of the houses were finished in the United States and sent in pieces to Panama and there put together. Hospitals had to be erected, and you find these now at both ends of the line. A city grew up at Colon and at Panama increased in size, so that to-day you have houses, hospitals, offices and cities with which to do your work."

"You have also the Panama Railroad, ready to transport materials and to lay them down along the line of the canal. This road is well equipped and running. It was constructed in the early fifties, when the present sanitary arrangements had not been made, and it consequently cost an enormous loss of life. A similar road will have to be built along the line of the Nicaragua Canal if you choose that route, and it will cost many lives to construct it. We have had no yellow fever to speak of for some years, and I feel safe in saying that there is now no danger to the health of Americans at Panama."

"But suppose we buy the canal, Senator, can you supply the labor needed to complete it?"

Easy to Get Laborers From West Indies.

"Yes. There will be no trouble in getting good workmen. You can bring them over

from Jamaica and others of the West Indies Islands, and we can supply much from Colombia itself. We have a large number of idle people who would seek work of you, and the employment of these would take away a part of our revolutionary forces. It would render the Government secure, and would gradually make Colombia the richest and most important of the South American States."

"But the isthmus of Panama is thinly populated," said I.

"No. It has more inhabitants than most people think," replied Senator Silva. "The isthmus of Panama belongs to a Province which has an area four times as big as Massachusetts. There are parts of it which have great natural resources, and together with the rest of Colombia, it will furnish an enormous field for American capital."

"Suppose the Panama canal is chosen, will Americans have any special advantages in Colombia?"

"I should think so," replied the Colombian Minister. "The canal would bring our countries closer together. It would cement the friendly relations which now obtain between us, and we should naturally favor American capital and American immigration."

"I suppose you know," continued Senator Silva, "that Colombia is an empire in its natural resources. It is of great size. You could put ten States of the size of New York into it and have space to spare. The most of the land is high and healthy, and we have vast areas which will raise coffee, sugar, cacao and other crops. We have some of the best grazing lands of the world, and the Cauca Valley might easily be made the garden of the universe. The valley lies between the mountains not far below Panama, extending roughly speaking, north and south. It has an area as great as Texas, and its climate is well suited to your people. The canal will develop it."

"You know something of our minerals,"

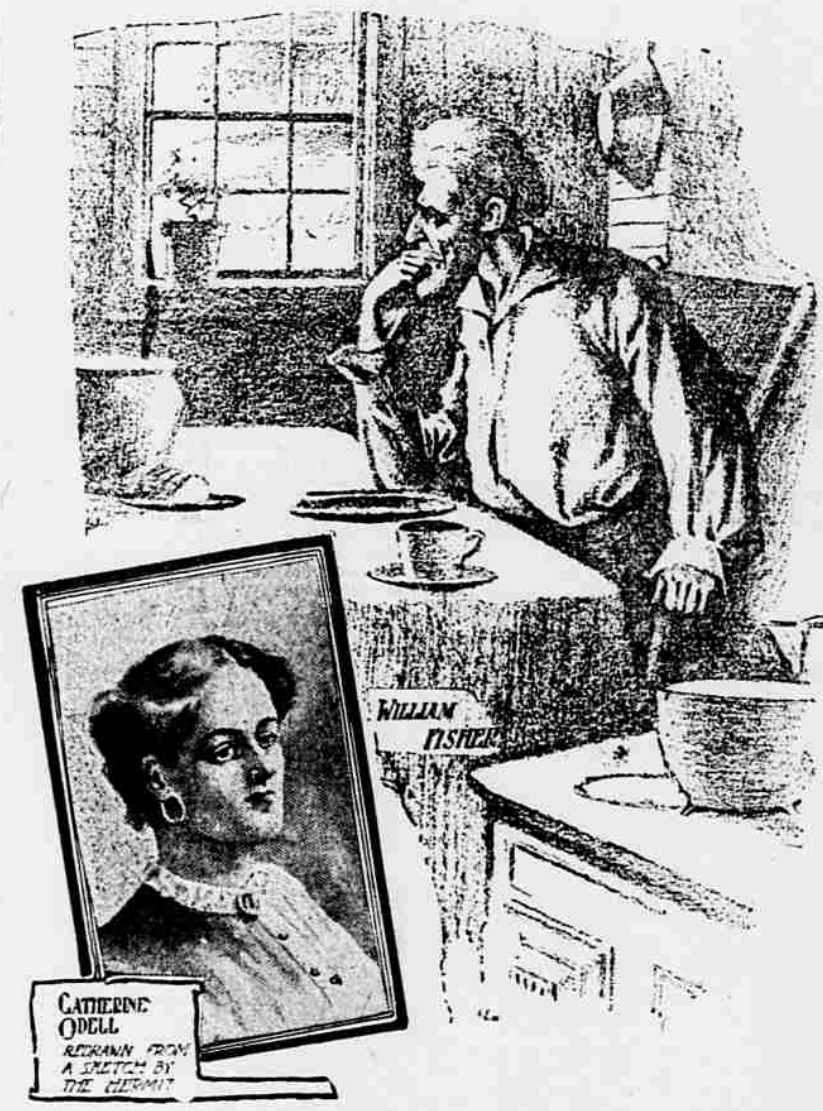
"My country has already produced more than \$700,000,000 worth of the precious metals, and we now stand fourth among the great gold-producing countries. We are led only by the United States, Australia and South Africa. Large amounts of American capital are already invested in Colombia, and if you complete this canal we shall probably be partners in the development of the richest parts of all South America."

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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WEALTHY HERMIT'S THIRTY YEARS VIGIL FOR LOVE.

OLD, SICK AND LONELY, THIS INSANE RECLUSE VIGOROUSLY RESISTS ALL ATTEMPTS TO TAKE HIM TO AN ASYLUM.



Special Correspondence of The Sunday Republic.

New York, May 23.—Sleepy Hollow, Wash. Irving's quaint, gothic ridden Sleepy Hollow now offers to the world another romance in the life story of William Fisher, the hermit of Ardley. In all the legends of the story of old Hudson there is no tale more beautiful, more pathetic, few more unmeaning, than that of this man, who became an anchorite for love of a woman.

Until the village authorities forced an entrance into his retreat last week, William Fisher had lived an ideal hermit's life for thirty years. For thirty years no human being crossed his threshold until that day when the Sheriff's jury ruthlessly invaded his haven for the purpose of formally declaring him insane and incapable of managing his large estate.

So far, however, the hermit has vigorously resisted all attempts to take him away to the insane asylum. Old and sick as he is, he has so far succeeded in defying intruders, and declares that the Ardley authorities will never take him alive.

The day after the visit of the Sheriff's jury I found my way to the lonely hermitage and saw and talked with the hermit himself. He lives not more than a stone's throw from the old Sleepy Hollow highway, and within sight of the bridge which still said to be haunted by the headless horseman of the legend.

It is a quaint little house of Dutch architecture—it is better to say that it is a ruin—a quaint little house, for it is now a ruin—a ruin. A dense growth of old-fashioned shrubbery—lilacs and sweet briars and snowball trees—conceals it completely from the passing traveler; and, indeed, the very existence of the hermitage had been forgotten by many of the country people until the recent invasion of it. So, too, had the love story of the hermit been almost forgotten.

Trees and Garden Shrubs Have Formed a Bower.

There is only one way of ingress to his retreat, and that is by an obscure path which winds a labyrinthine passage through the shrubbery and undergrowth. At the end of the path is a steep declivity, and within sight of the bridge which still said to be haunted by the headless horseman of the legend. It is impossible to imagine a human being living there. The roof is sunken and a side of the house is fallen in. Overhead, the trees and garden shrubs have interlaced and form a sort of bower. The air is laden with the perfume of lilacs, and young birds twitter in their nests which their parents have bulged in the eaves.

The old rain barrel, split and sprung, still stands under the drip of the sunken roof. The grass has grown over the old well-tramped dooryard, and as if to make the hermit's defense complete, a wild blackberry bush blazes in the front threshold.

The desolation seemed complete. No sound or sight of living human being, only the smell of the lilacs and the twittering of the birds in the eaves and the haunting memories, the echoes of the once merry, jovial homestead.

TOPEKA SOCIETY—YOUNG WOMEN



MISS ETHELYN STEINBERG OF TOPEKA, KAS.

Topeka, Kas., May 23.—Miss Ethelyn Steinberg is the wife of a prominent musician of this city. Mrs. Steinberg was a popular

MRS. HARRY STEINBERG.

girl, and, until her recent marriage to Mr. Steinberg, was known as one of the leaders in her social circle.

"THE YANKEE INVASION" FROM A NEW POINT OF VIEW.

Frank G. Carpenter, Now in London, Will Tell Republic Readers What Americans Are Doing and What They Can Do in the Old World—Pictures of England and Continental Europe in 1902.



FRANK G. CARPENTER.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Beginning with the first Sunday in June The Republic will publish a remarkable series of letters from Frank G. Carpenter on what the Yankees are doing in Europe and on the changes which are going on in that Continent. The old Europe is fast passing away, and a new country and people are rapidly changing. Trade conditions are rapidly changing. The people are shaking and beginning to realize that the American giant of the West has stirred his horns and is ready to fight with them for all that is worth having of this world and this world's goods. The fight, indeed, has already begun, and even at its starting it is in the favor of the West. The greatest countries of Europe are attempting to combat it. Their Parliaments already refer to it as "The American Invasion." The Emperor of Germany has called it the "Great American Peril."

In Great Britain, Germany, France, Russia, Holland and Belgium, as well as in the other countries of Continental Europe, this increase of American commerce is steadily going on. The Yankee exporter has put on the seven-league boots of the Twentieth Century.

To describe the new condition and the thousand and one changes caused by it, Mr. Carpenter has planned an extensive tour of the United Kingdom and the Continent. He is now in England, and later on will visit Russia, Germany, France and other countries in the interest of Republic readers.

His work will be along the line of this invasion, but it will cover a wide range and will show of other subjects relating to the New Europe. Electricity, shipping, commerce, technical schools, labor and wages, will form a part of it, and at the same time he will show how England's old bids fair to give out, and how we eventually must keep our British cousins warm. The New London, the gigantic metropolis of the world, is shaking loose its old shackles, and is opening its arms to the American people. The big trusts of the "Tight Little Island" and those of our country are made.

In Germany Mr. Carpenter will describe the Kaiser's new palace, the new technical schools which the Emperor has instituted to aid him in making the commercial conquest of the world.

Mr. Carpenter's letters from Russia cannot but be of the greatest interest. He will visit the capital, St. Petersburg, and give letters about the young Czar and his Government. He will investigate the changes which are going on in industrial Russia.

River country. He was the only son—the only child of the richest man in Sleepy Hollow. He was eagerly sought after by the girls of the village, but he remained a bachelor, immune and impervious to the enchantment of love until, well, until one day he met the right girl, and then—be loved.

The right girl was Catherine Odell, the daughter of Nehemiah Odell, a wealthy farmer of Dobbs Ferry. The handsome, dark-eyed, hook-nosed bachelor loved her madly, and his love was returned. The day was set for the wedding. It was to be a great feast, and the whole country was invited. There was to be a dance and frolic at the bride's house after the ceremony, and then the company was to repair the next day on horseback to the house of the bridegroom's parents, the very house in the ruins of which the hermit now lives.

Here the most important part of the marriage celebration was to take place—the "infatuation" or welcome home to the bride couple. All these preparations had been completed, the bride's gown lay folded in the lavender scented chest, and the pies and the cakes and the crullers were baked and stacked in the cellars of the two great farmhouses.

Then came the tragedy. On the day before the wedding the lover and his sweetheart were crossing the ferry. The sweet heart was drowned.

Consecrated His Life to Memory of Dead Love.

From that day William Fisher, the rich and gallant beau of Sleepy Hollow, became a recluse. He consecrated his life to the memory of his dead love. The very house in the ruins of which the hermit now lives, was set for the wedding. It was to be a great feast, and the whole country was invited. There was to be a dance and frolic at the bride's house after the ceremony, and then the company was to repair the next day on horseback to the house of the bridegroom's parents, the very house in the ruins of which the hermit now lives.

and will open up a new view of the enormous public works now building. The Transiberian Railroad is only one of these. Russia has canal and other undertakings in hand which are even more wonderful. Russia is already a great manufacturing country, and expects to have a great share in the markets of both Europe and Asia in the future. The Russians are now buying millions of dollars' worth of American goods. Mr. Carpenter will tell how these are handled, and show how millions more can be placed.

Returning again to Germany, the great trade route of the Rhine will be described. Its factories, rather than its castles, will form the material of Mr. Carpenter's letters, and he will carry us along on boats loaded with American meat, wheat and cotton, rather than on the scenic pleasure steamers of that famous river.

South and south, Germany will give millions of dollars' worth of American goods. Mr. Carpenter will tell how these are handled, and show how millions more can be placed.

These are only a few of the subjects that will be handled in this remarkable series of letters. Mr. Carpenter has traveled all around the world and up and down it in search of information for American readers. In addition to having visited every part of the world, he has been to South America, has sailed the Pacific Ocean from the Alaskan Islands to Van Diemen's Land, and has made three trips to Asia to describe changes and conditions of that continent. Spain and Java, Burma and India, Egypt and the Holy Land, Turkey and Greece are well known to him, and in this trip to Europe he goes to lands which he has visited many times in the past, and which he is now able to describe in the new and changing conditions of this year, 1902.

These letters are not merely commercial subjects. They will take all matters of human interest along with the commercial progress. They will cover such a wide range that they will run for one year, beginning with the first Sunday in June and continuing from Sunday to Sunday thereafter.

He wished to see nothing, to remember nothing of the past except the woman he loved. He arranged two back rooms, the kitchen and adjoining bedroom, and declared his intention of living and dying there, the world forgetting and by the world forgot.

The interior of the hovel presented a picture only equaled by that of the hermit himself. What had one time been the bright old kitchen, full of sunshine and laughter and redolent of the savory dishes for which the Dutch housewife was noted, is now overrun with rats and mice, and while I talked with the anchorite a gray squirrel came hopping in at the doorway. He had built his nest several years ago, the hermit told me, in the woodpile behind the rusty stove. This woodpile occupied one whole end of the room, and was as high as the ceiling.

"What right have they to come and disturb a poor, harmless old man?" he moaned, looking at me helplessly and then gazing about him at the walls of his dwelling.

"Yes, they say I am crazy—do you hear?—say I am crazy. My God! and just because I cannot forget the woman I loved. Yes, they say I am crazy because I worship her memory."

The old man took off his strangely woven wig and looked at it in a dazed fashion. "It was made out of my beard," he said simply. "I had a long beard once—it reached down this far—it touched his boy's knees," he said, "then I grew bald, and one day I cut of my beard and wore it into a wig like this."

Here the hermit took down a robin's nest from the clock shelf. The clock was stopped when his mother died and had never been started.

As my eyes grew accustomed to the shadows in which the room was shrouded I gradually discerned that the walls were covered with drawings of a woman's head—a buxom, pretty girl she was, with the hair of a Botticelli Madonna and great hoops in her ears.